

## COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

# FIRE, DEFENSIBLE SPACE AND YOU...

## FIRE, PLANTS, DEFENSIBLE SPACE AND YOU

Many portions of the unincorporated areas of the County of San Diego share expansive, rural settings of native plant material. Fire is an important factor in maintaining the healthy status of these native plant species. Since these areas are also highly desirable places in which to live, maintaining a defensible fire space around structures is essential for protection against fire. Following are some helpful hints to assist you in defending your property:

### DEFENSIBLE SPACE

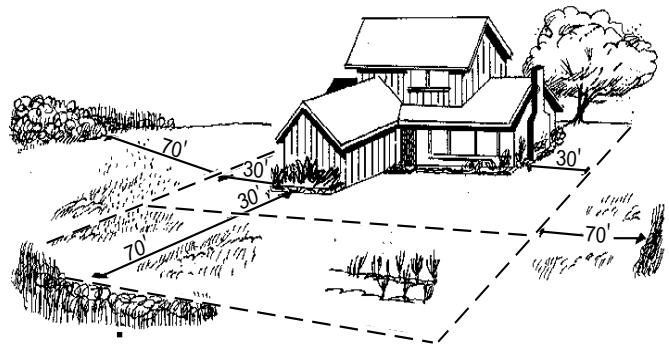
Defensible space is the area around a structure, where material capable of causing fire has been cleared, reduced or changed, to act as a barrier between an advancing fire and the structure. Creating a defensible space involves the clearing of flammable vegetation to a minimum of 100 feet from a structure. The first 30 feet should be clear of all flammable vegetation. An additional 70 feet should be selectively clear of all flammable vegetation. See plant list beginning on Page 4 for acceptable vegetation in your area.

In the cleared area, select plants that:

- ◆ grow close to the ground,
- ◆ have a low sap or resin content,
- ◆ grow without accumulating dead branches, needles or leaves,
- ◆ are easily maintained and pruned, and
- ◆ are drought-tolerant.

### PLANTS TO AVOID IN THIS AREA

- ◆ trees: evergreen conifers (pines, cypresses, junipers), and eucalyptus,
- ◆ shrubs: ornamental grasses, acacias, hopseed (dodonea), and all berry vines.

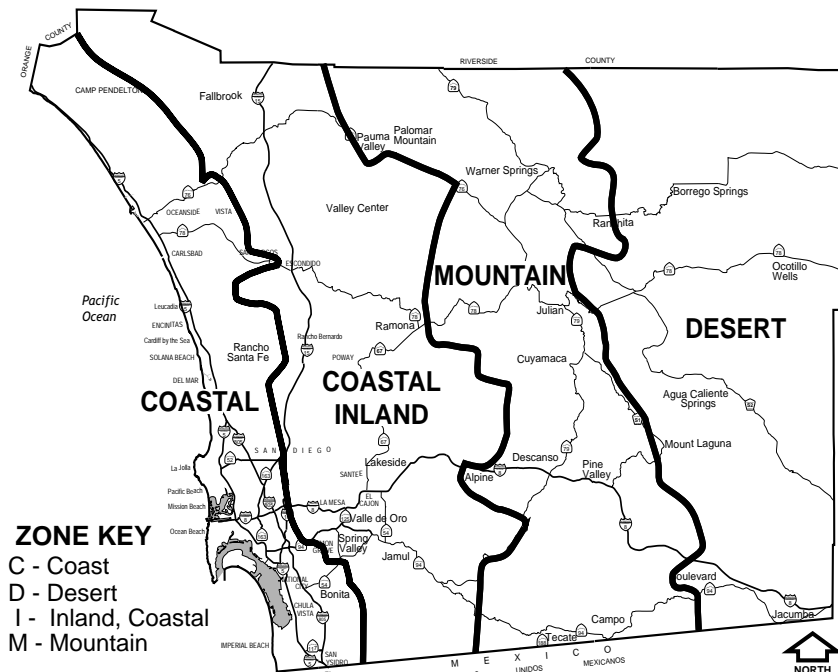


## OTHER PRECAUTIONS TO CONSIDER IN LANDSCAPE DESIGN:

- ◆ Vary the height of plants and provide adequate spacing. The taller the plant, the wider apart they need to be spaced.
- ◆ For trees over 18 feet tall, prune limbs within six feet of the ground to prevent ground fires from spreading upwards into trees.
- ◆ Remove dead limbs overhanging your roof including any limb within 10 feet of your chimney.
- ◆ Work with your neighbors to clear common areas between houses, and prune areas of heavy vegetation that are a fire threat to both properties.
- ◆ Avoid planting trees under or near electrical lines. They may grow into, or make contact with overhead lines under windy conditions, causing a fire.
- ◆ If you have a heavily wooded area on your property, remove some of the trees to decrease tree density which will also decrease the fire hazard. Improve growing conditions by removing dead, weak, diseased trees and those with an obvious lean, leaving a healthy mixture of older and younger trees.
- ◆ Properly dispose of all cut vegetation by an approved method. Open burning usually requires a burning permit. Contact your fire department for local requirements (see Page 14).
- ◆ Stack firewood and scrap wood piles at least 30 feet from any structure. Clear away any flammable vegetation within 10 feet of these wood piles. Many homes have “survived” as a fire moved past it, only to burn later from a wood pile that ignited after the firefighters had moved on to protect other homes.
- ◆ Clear pine needles, leaves or other debris from the roof of your house and any other buildings on your property. Check and clean your roof gutters several times during the spring, summer and fall to remove debris that can easily ignite from a spark.

## COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO ACCEPTABLE PLANTS FOR A DEFENSIBLE SPACE IN FIRE PRONE AREAS

### SAN DIEGO COUNTY CLIMATE ZONES



**ALL PLANTS ON THE FOLLOWING LIST** are considered to be drought-tolerant in the particular climate zone noted. Those which grow best in riparian areas, as indicated by the (R), are the least drought-tolerant plants on the list.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** When planting, it is necessary to deep water to encourage plant roots to seek natural moisture in the soil. This watering should continue for at least three years to allow the plants to naturalize. More water should be provided in summer and less (if any) in the winter. These plants should be weaned off the supplemental irrigation and become less dependent on it over the establishment period.

No plant is totally fire resistant. The plants listed were chosen due to their high water content, minimum amount of flammable resins and/or low fuel volume.

# SUGGESTED PLANT LIST FOR A DEFENSIBLE SPACE



## TREES

### BOTANICAL NAME

### COMMON NAME

### CLIMATE ZONE

Acer

platanoides

rubrum

saccharinum

saccarum

macrophyllum

Norway Maple

Red Maple

Silver Maple

Sugar Maple

Big Leaf Maple

M

M

M

M

C/ (R)



## TREES

(continued)

### BOTANICAL NAME

### COMMON NAME

### CLIMATE ZONE

Alnus rhombifolia

Arbutus

unedo

Archontophoenix

cunninghamiana

Arctostaphylos spp.

Brahea

armata

edulis

Ceratonia siliqua

Cerdidium floridum

Cercis occidentalis

Cornus

nuttallii

stolonifera

Elaeagnus

angustifolia

Eriobotrya

japonica

Erythrina caffra

Ginkgo biloba 'Fairmount'

Gleditsia triacanthos

White Alder

Strawberry Tree

King Palm

Manzanita

Blue Hesper Palm

Guadalupe Palm

Carob

Blue Palo Verde

Western Redbud

Mountain Dogwood

Redtwig Dogwood

Russian Olive

Loquat

Kaffirboom Coral Tree

Fairmount Maidenhair Tree

Honey Locust

C/I/M (R)

All zones

C

C/I/D

C/D

C/D

C/I/D

D

C/I/M

I/M

I/M

I/M

C/I/D

C

I/M

I/D/M



## TREES (continued)

BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	CLIMATE ZONE
Juglans		
californica	California Walnut	I
hindsii	California Black Walnut	C/I
Lagerstroemia indica	Crape Myrtle	I/D/M
Ligustrum lucidum	Glossy Privet	I
Liquidambar styraciflua	Sweet Gum	C/I/M
Liriodendron tulipifera	Tulip Tree	I
Lyonothamnus floribundus		
ssp. asplenifolius	Fernleaf Catalina Ironwood	C
Melaleuca spp.	Melaleuca	C/I/D
Myoporum spp.	Myoporum	C/I
Nerium oleander	Oleander	C/I/D
Parkinsonia aculeata	Mexican Palo Verde	D
Pistacia		
chinensis	Chinese Pistache	C/I/D
vera	Pistachio Nut	I
Pittosporum		
phillyraeoides	Willow Pittosporum	C/I/D
viridiflorum	Cape Pittosporum	C/I
Platanus		
acerifolia	London Plane Tree	All zones
racemosa	California Sycamore	C/I/M
Populus		
alba	White Poplar	D/M
fremontii	Western Cottonwood	I
trichocarpa	Black Cottonwood	I/M



## TREES (continued)

BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	CLIMATE ZONE
Prunus		
xblireifiana	Flowering Plum	M
caroliniana	Carolina Laurel Cherry	C
cersifera 'Newport'	Newport Purple-Leaf Plum	M
ilicifolia	Hollyleaf Cherry	C
lyonii	Catalina Cherry	C
serrulata 'Kwanzan'	Flowering Cherry	M
yedoensis 'Akebono'	Akebono Flowering Cherry	M
Quercus		
agrifolia	Coast Live Oak	C/I
engelmannii	Engelmann Oak	I
suber	Cork Oak	C/I/D
Rhus		
lancea	African Sumac	C/I/D
Salix spp.	Willow	All zones (R)
Tristania conferta	Brisbane Box	C/I
Ulmus		
parvifolia	Chinese Elm	I/D
pumila	Siberian Elm	C/M
Umbellularia californica	California Bay Laurel	C/I



## SHRUBS

BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	CLIMATE ZONE
Agave	Century Plant	D
americana	Desert Century Plant	D
deserti	Shawís Century Plant	D
shawii		
Amorpha fruticosa	False Indigobush	I
Arbutus		
menziesii	Madrone	C/I
Arctostaphylos spp.	Manzanita	C/I/D
Atriplex		
canescens	Hoary Saltbush	I
lentiformis	Quail Saltbush	D
Baccharis		
glutinosa	Mule Fat	C/I
pilularis	Coyote Bush	C/I/D
Carissa grandiflora	Natal Plum	C/I
Ceanothus spp.	California Lilac	C/I/M
Cistus spp.	Rockrose	C/I/D
Cneoridium dumosum	Bushrue	C
Comarostaphylis		
diversifolia	Summer Holly	C
Convolvulus cneorum	Bush Morning Glory	C/I/M
Dalea		
orcuttii	Orcuttís Delea	D
spinosa	Smoke Tree	I/D
Elaeagnus		
pungens	Silverberry	C/I/M
Encelia		
californica	Coast Sunflower	C/I
farinosa	White Brittlebush	D/I



## SHRUBS (continued)

BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	CLIMATE ZONE
Eriobotrya deflexa	Bronze Loquat	C/I
Eriophyllum confertiflorum	Golden Yarrow	C/I
staechadifolium	Lizard Tail	C
Escallonia spp.	Escallonia	C/I
Feijoa sellowiana	Pineapple Guava	C/I/D
Fouquieria splendens	Ocotillo	D
Fremontodendron californicum	Flannelbush	I/M
mexicanum	Southern Flannelbush	I
Galvezia juncea	Baja Bush-Snapdragon	C
speciosa	Island Bush-Snapdragon	C
Garrya elliptica	Coast Silktassel	C/I
flavescens	Ashy Silktassel	I/M
Heteromeles arbutifolia	Toyon	C/I/M
Lantana spp.	Lantana	C/I/D
Lotus scoparius	Deerweed	C/I
Mahonia spp.	Barberry	C/I/M
Malacothamnus clementinus	San Clemente Island Bush Mallow	C
fasciculatus	Mesa Bushmallow	C/I
Melaleuca spp.	Melaleuca	C/I/D
Mimulus spp.	Monkeyflower	C/I (R)
Nolia parryi	Parry's Nolina	I
parryi ssp. wolfii	Wolf's Bear Grass	D
Photinia spp.	Photinia	All zones
Pittosporum crassifolium	Queensland Pittosporum	
rhombifolium	Wheeler's Dwarf	
tobira 'Wheeleri'	Victorian Box	
undulatum	Cape Pittosporum	
viridiflorum	Cape Plumbago	
Plumbago auriculata		
Prunus caroliniana	Carolina Laurel Cherry	
ilicifolia	Hollyleaf Cherry	
lyonii	Catalina Cherry	
Puncia granatum	Pomegranate	
Pyracantha spp.	Firethorn	
Quercus dumosa	Scrub Oak	C/I
Rhamus alaternus	Italian Blackthorn	C/I
californica	Coffeeberry	C/I/M



## SHRUBS (continued)

BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	CLIMATE ZONE
Rhaphiolepis spp.	Rhaphiolepis	C/I/D
Rhus		
continus	Smoke Tree	M
integrifolia	Lemonade Berry	C/I
laurina	Laurel Sumac	C/I
lentii	Pink-Flowering Sumac	C/D
ovata	Sugarbush	I/M
trilobata	Squawbush	I
Ribes		
viburnifolium	Evergreen Currant	C/I
speciosum	Fuschia-Flowering Gooseberry	C/I/D
Romneya coulteri	Matilija Poppy	I
Rosa		
californica	California Wild Rose	C/I
minutifolia	Baja California Wild Rose	C/I
Salvia spp.	Sage	All zones
Sambucus spp.	Elderberry	C/I/M
Symphoricarpos mollis	Creeping Snowberry	C/I
Syringa vulgaris	Lilac	M
Tecomaria capensis	Cape Honeysuckle	C/I/D
Teucrium fruticans	Bush Germander	C/I
Toxicodendron		
diversilobum	Poison Oak	I/M
Verbena		
lilacina	Lilac Verbena	C
Xylosma congestum	Shiny Xylosma	C/I
Yucca		
schidigera	Mojave Yucca	D
whipplei	Foothill Yucca	I



## GROUNDCOVERS

BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	CLIMATE ZONE
Achillea	Yarrow	All zones
Aptenia cordifolia	Aptenia	C
Arctostaphylos spp.	Manzanita	C/I/D
Baccharis		
pilularis	Coyote Bush	C/I/D
Ceanothus spp.	California Lilac	C/I/M
Cerastium tomentosum	Snow-in-Summer	All zones
Coprosma kirkii	Creeping Coprosma	C/I/D
Cotoneaster spp.	Redberry	All zones
Drosanthemum hispidum	Rosea Ice Plant	C/I
Dudleya		
brittonii	Britton's Chalk Dudleya	C
Eschscholzia californica	California Poppy	All zones
Euonymus fortunei		
'Carrierei'	Glossy Winter Creeper	M
'Coloratus'	Purple-Leaf Winter Creeper	M





## GROUNDCOVERS (continued)

BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	CLIMATE ZONE
<i>Ferocactus viridescens</i>	Coast Barrel Cactus	C
<i>Gaillardia grandiflora</i>	Blanket Flower	All zones
<i>Gazania</i> spp.	<i>Gazania</i>	C/I
<i>Helianthemum</i> spp.	Sunrose	All zones
<i>Lantana</i> spp.	<i>Lantana</i>	C/I/D
<i>Lasthenia</i>		
<i>californica</i>	Common Goldfields	I
<i>glabrata</i>	Coastal Goldfields	C
<i>Lupinus</i> spp.	Lupine	C/I/M
<i>Myoporum</i> spp.	<i>Myoporum</i>	C/I
<i>Pyracantha</i> spp.	Firethorn	All zones
<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i>	Rosemary	C/I/D
<i>Santolina</i>		
<i>chamaecyparissus</i>	Lavender Cotton	All zones
<i>virens</i>	<i>Santolina</i>	All zones
<i>Trifolium frageriferum</i>	O'Connor's Legume	C/I
<i>Verbena</i>		
<i>rigida</i>	<i>Verbena</i>	All zones
<i>Viguiera laciniata</i>	San Diego Sunflower	C/I
<i>Vinca</i>		
<i>major</i>	Periwinkle	C/I
<i>minor</i>	Dwarf Periwinkle	M
<i>Toxicodendron</i>		
<i>diversilobum</i>	Poison Oak	I/M
<i>Verbena</i>		
<i>lilacina</i>	Lilac Verbena	C
<i>Xylosma congestum</i>	Shiny Xylosma	C/I
<i>Yucca</i>		
<i>schidigera</i>	Mojave Yucca	D
<i>whipplei</i>	Foothill Yucca	I



## AFTER A FIRE...

**It is imperative to temporarily stabilize any slopes on the property prior to the winter rainy season.** Rains can cause slope failure and mudslides, both upstream from you, and downstream to your neighbor. Some preventive methods that can be used singly, or in combination with each other, are:

- ◆ **Plastic sheeting** - placed over the slope will divert water. Make sure the water will flow into culverts, brow ditches or other diversions.
- ◆ **Straw mulch**
- ◆ **Jute mesh**
- ◆ **Wood excelsior matting**
- ◆ **Geotextiles**
- ◆ **Straw bale dikes**
- ◆ **Silt fences**
- ◆ **Seed planting of native annuals and perennials.**

These methods of erosion control act only as temporary measures to stabilize slopes. If burned slopes have previously been covered with native vegetation, new plants will sprout from the underground roots. As the rainy season progresses, other native plants will germinate also. Man made slopes, interior to many projects, will need to be replanted with deep rooting plant materials. Trees and shrubs are preferred to ice plants to insure long term erosion control.

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AUGUST, 1998

## FIRE AGENCY CONTACT LIST

ALPINE	(619) 445-2635	RINCON DEL DIABLO	(760) 745-5522
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BORREGO SPRINGS	(760) 767-5436	SAN MARCOS	(760) 744-1050
DEER SPRINGS	(760) 749-8001	SAN MIGUEL	(619) 670-0500
EAST COUNTY F.P.D.	(619) 579-6034	VALLEY CENTER	(760) 751-7600
ENCINITAS	(760) 633-2820	VISTA	(760) 726-2145
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LAKESIDE	(619) 390-2350	Forestry and Fire Protection	(619) 588-0364
LOWER SWEETWATER	(619) 475-8453	United States Forest Service	(619) 557-5262
NORTH COUNTY	(760) 723-2005	County Fire Service Coordinator	(619) 565-3490
PAUMA VALLEY	(760) 742-3704	County Farm and Home Advisor	(619) 694-2845
PINE VALLEY	(619) 530-5588	Western Insurance Information Service	(800) 397-1679
RAMONA	(760) 788-2244		
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